

Message Text

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UNCLAS ROME 15616

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PINR, IT

SUBJ: DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS OVER
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SALARY AND BENEFIT INCREASES

REF: ROME 14822

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FEDERATION DGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU) ARE TO MEET SEPTEMBER 23 WITH PIER GIORGIO BRESANI, NEWLY APPOINTED UNDERSECRETARY FOR BUREAUCRATIC REFORM IN THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT TO BEGIN CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING TWO MILLION GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES. CONTRACTS INVOLVING RAILROAD WORKERS, CIVIL SERVANTS, TEACHERS, LOCAL AND REGIONAL EMPLOYEES, ET AL ARE UP FOR RENEWAL THIS FALL.

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2. THE SUBJECT NEGOTIATION HAVE RESULTED IN SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT

BETWEEN THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS OVER THE AMOUNT OF WAGE AND BENEFIT INCREASES TO BE SOUGHT. THE CGIL CONTINUES TO BE INFLUENCED BY THE PCI LINE OF ECONOMIC RESTRAINT AND MODERATION WHILE CISL AND UIL ARE MORE INFLUENCED BY CATEGORY UNION PRESSURE TO REGAIN EARNING POWER LOST DUE TO RECENT INFLATION. DISCONTENT AT THE RANK AND FILE LEVEL HAS ALSO INCREASED THE INFLUENCE OF THE INDEPENDENT UNIONS WHO ARE PARTICULARLY STRONG IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR.

3. CGIL IS CALLING FOR A MODEST 25,000 LIRE (ABOUT THIRTY DOLLARS) PER MONTH FLAT WAGE AND BENEFIT INCREASE ACROSS THE BOARD FOR ALL GOVERNMENT WORKERS WHILE CISL AND UIL ARE INSISTING THEY CANNOT SETTLE FOR LESS THAN 50,000 LIRE PER MONTH. ECONOMISTS ESTIMATE THAT THE LATTER FIGURE WOULD PRESENT AN INCREASE OF ABOUT EIGHTEEN PERCENT IN LABOR COSTS. THE INDEPENDENT UNIONS ARE ASKING FOR 100,000 LIRE PER MONTH.

4. /COMMENT/: THE CONTRADICTION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AUSTERITY OBJECTIVES, AIMED AT CURBING INFLATION AND REVIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND THE TENDENCY TO RAISE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SALARIES TO LEVELS COMMENSURATE WITH INDUSTRY IS AT LEAST PARTIALLY A CONSEQUENCE OF THE WEAKENED LEADERSHIP OF THE THREE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS VIS A VIS THE INDEPENDENT UNIONS, THEIR REPRESENTATIVE RANK AND FILE AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES. GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AS WELL AS OTHER SUBJECTS, PRINCIPALLY INDUSTRIAL REORGANIZATION, ARE EXPECTED TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE CCU-GOI SUMMIT MEETING (SEE ROME 14822) NOW SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 27. VOLPE

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